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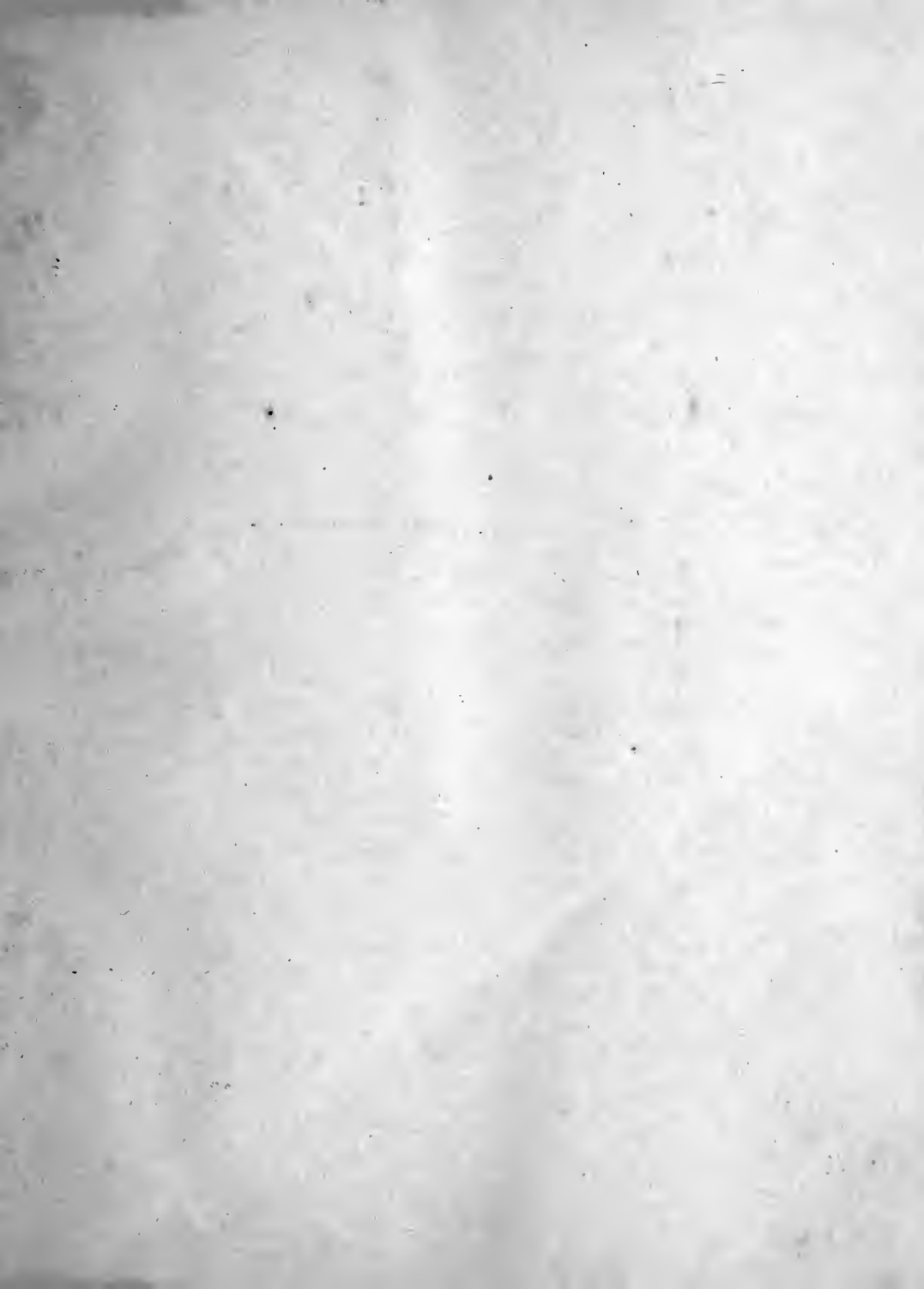
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The...
Christian Sabbath.



PRESS OF
JEWELL PUBLISHING CO.,
SPRINGFIELD, MO.

Divine Authority

for the

CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

—BY—

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—OF—

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SPRINGFIELD, MO.



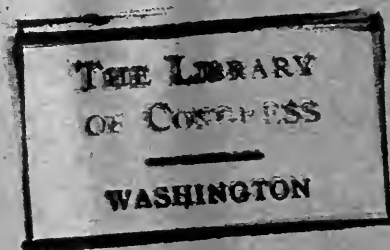
“Political Romanism,” “The Christian Rule of
Faith,” “Ingersolism,” “Baptismal Re-
mission,” “Infant Baptism,” “Wo-
men in the General Con-
ference,” Etc., Etc.



—“Prove all things.”

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PREFACE.

Two years ago during my first year at Benton Avenue M. E. Church in this city, the Seventh Day Advent Soul-Sleepers, pitched their tent a few blocks east of my Church and for several weeks run a tent meeting, propagating their peculiar doctrines, and trying to proselyte others to their faith. Some of our people who attended their meetings and read their tracts, which they industriously circulated, begun to be disturbed in mind about their doctrines, and I felt that it was my duty to preach on those points, which I did, announcing beforehand that on the next Sabbath I would preach on "The Divine Authority for the Observance of the Christian Sabbath." I prepared my sermon with great care, writing it out in full. Some time after I preached the same sermon in our District Conference at Billings, Mo., and the Conference requested its publication. A multiplicity of labors and cares have prevented me from complying with that request until now. I have rewritten and enlarged it, and covered the whole ground, both of the Scriptural and

Historical arguments, and the result is in the following pages. It will be seen that these pestilential troublers of our Israel have no foundation for their teachings, neither in the Scriptures nor in the early history of the Church, and that their claim that the early Church observed the Jewish Sabbath, and that the Pope of Rome, or the Emperor Constantine changed the day of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week, is not only without any foundation in fact, but that it is positively contradicted, both by the New Testament and the early history of the Church. Put this antidote in every community that is infested with this error and let all men read the facts. Praying God's blessing on this little tract, I send it forth on its mission of truth and love. May it lead many out of the meshes of error into the clear light of God's truth, is the prayer of the author.

G. W. HUGHEY.

Springfield, Mo., July 13th, 1896.

THE DIVINE AUTHORITY FOR THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH.

The two questions we propose to discuss in the following pages are :

I. Are Christians under obligations to keep the Jewish Sabbath?

II. What authority have we for observing the Christian Sabbath?

1. That God, at the creation of man did set apart one day in seven as a day of rest and religious devotion, all admit.

2. That from the creation to the Resurrection of Christ that day was the seventh day, all admit.

3. While the Sabbath was instituted at the creation of man, at the giving of the law it was incorporated into the Mosaic Institutes, not only in the Ten Commandments, but also into the law of Moses, and it henceforth became a part of that law, and it was binding on the Israelites as long as the law of Moses was binding.

4. The same authority which enjoined the seventh day upon the Israelites was certainly com-

petent to abrogate that day and enjoin the first day of the week—the day on which Christ arose from the dead, as the day henceforth to be observed by the Church of the Lord Jesus as the day of rest and religious worship in memory of the completion of the work of redemption on that day.

5. The inspired Apostles, acting under the command of the Lord Jesus, or under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, were certainly competent to ordain this change of the day of rest and worship from the seventh to the first day of the week.

6. Did they abrogate the Jewish, or Seventh-Day Sabbath, and institute in its place the first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath? This is a question of fact, that can be settled only by an appeal to Apostolic teaching and practice.

7. The fact of the change of the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week may be proved in three ways :—

a. By a law or command abrogating the Mosaic Institutes and declaring that they are not binding on the Christian Church.

b. By a declaration that the first day of the week is the Sabbath.

c. By establishing the fact by Apostolic command or example that the first day of the week was

ordained or observed by the Apostles as the Christian Sabbath. Did they in any or all of these ways change the Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week?

8. It is an undeniable fact of Christian History, that from the day of the resurrection of our Lord the Apostles, and Apostolic Church, did observe the first day of the week as the day of Christian worship and thanksgiving, and they gave this day, and no other, to the Gentile Church as the day of rest or Sabbath, and the Gentile Christians never observed any other day as the Sabbath from the beginning of the Christian Church.

9. The Jewish Christians, especially those who lived in Judea and Jerusalem during the first century observed the law of Moses, had their children circumcised, and until the destruction of Jerusalem offered sacrifices and observed the law in all things. But this in no wise makes the law of Moses binding on the Christian Church, nor did the Apostles, nor the Jewish Church make any such requirements of the Gentile Christians. When some Judaizing teachers in the Apostolic Church attempted to put "this yoke" on the neck of the Gentile Christians, the Apostles and the Church at Jerusalem promptly negated that claim and set the Gentile

Church free from the requirements of the law. The Jewish Christians observed the customs of the law, simply as national customs in which they had been brought up, and hence the Apostles did not interfere with them, indeed they observed the law themselves for the sake of their influence with their Jewish brethren. In confirmation of this, see Acts, 21:20-26 :

“20. And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe ; and they are all zealous of the law :

21. And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after their customs.

“22. What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together : for they will hear that thou art come.

23. Do therefore this that we say to thee : We have four men which have a vow on them ;

24. Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads ; and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing ; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law.

25. As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no

such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication.

26. Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them."

Here are three facts stated that we must note :

1. All the Jewish Christians of Jerusalem "were zealous of the law," and had their children circumcised. Now, if the fact that the Jewish Christians kept the Jewish Sabbath during the Apostolic age, and while James, our Lord's brother, was at the head of the Church in Jerusalem, therefore we ought to keep the Jewish Sabbath, it follows with equal force that we ought to circumcise our children and keep the whole law of Moses, because the Jewish Christians unquestionably did all of these things, and they were not condemned for it either by James, or the other Apostles.

2. Paul did teach Gentile Christians, and the Jews among them, not to observe the law of Moses, nor to have their children circumcised.

3. That the Church at Jerusalem had written to the Gentile Christians "that they observe no such things;" that is, that they should not ob-

serve the law of Moses, nor circumcise their children, nor keep the Jewish Sabbath.

10. During the whole of the Apostolic period, notwithstanding the decree of the Council of Jerusalem, Acts 15:23-29, there were Judaizing teachers who troubled the Gentile Churches, endeavoring to bring them under the yoke of the law, and teaching them that except they observed the law of Moses, had their children circumcised, and kept the Jewish Sabbath, they could not be saved. The Epistles of Paul were written, in a very large measure to counteract this pernicious teaching. This appears notably in his Epistle to the Galatians, and Colossians. In Col. 2:14-23 he condemns all this Judaizing teaching, and formally declares that the law with all its ordinances, including its holy days and Sabbaths, was abolished in Christ. He says :—

14. “Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

15. And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

16. Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days :

17. Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.

18. Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,

19. And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.

20. Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,

21. (Touch not; taste not; handle not;

22. Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?

23. Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will worship, and humility, and neglecting of the body; not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh."

On this passage we note, 1, that Paul here affirms that Christ, by his death, "blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, and which was contrary unto us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." How far this "blotting out" and "taking away" extends we are told in verse 16—"Let no man judge (that is condemn) you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of any holyday, or the new moon, OR THE SABBATH DAYS." All Jewish distinctions in regard to "meats and drinks or in respect to their holydays, new

moons or Sabbaths," are done away in Christ. Here we have a positive and specific abrogation of the Jewish Sabbath. In our translation we have "Sabbath-days," but "days" is not in the original at all. It is simply "Sabbatoon," the neuter plural of "Sabbaton"—Sabbath, and literally translated it is "Sabbaths," and includes all the Jewish Sabbaths, or Sabbaths of the law. There is no possible escape here. If the law in regard to "meats and drinks, and new moons, and holydays" was "blotted out" or done away in Christ, the plural form of the word includes all the days among the Jews called Sabbaths, and this declaration abrogates them all. In verses 22 and 23 the Gentile Christians are expressly forbidden to observe or use these Jewish "ordinances," and Paul declares that they were not to be enjoined on the Gentile Churches "after the commandments and doctrines of men." This is a positive declaration that the only authority that exists in the Christian Church for the observance of the Jewish Sabbath, is "the commandments and doctrines (didaskalias) teachings of men." The Jewish Sabbath is not enjoined upon the Christian Church by the commandments and teachings of God ; but only "by the commandments and teachings of men." Which shall we obey, "the commandments and

teachings” of God, or “the commandments and teachings of men?” This passage ought to be sufficient to satisfy every Christian mind that the Mosaic law, with all of its ordinances, holydays and Sabbaths has been abolished in Christ, and that Christians are not only not under obligations to observe them, but that they are positively forbidden to do so.

11. In the fifteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, we have this whole question settled by a formal decree of the Apostles and elders, and ratified by the whole Church at Jerusalem. The Church at Antioch, a Gentile Church, was greatly troubled by the Judaizing teachers, who came down from Jerusalem and taught the Gentile Christians and said : “Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses ye cannot be saved.” Paul and Barnabas opposed them, and after a good deal of debating and contention it was finally decided that the whole question should be referred to the Apostles and elders at Jerusalem. The question was brought before them, and all parties were fully heard, and then a definite decision was reached. In verse 5 we read :—

5. “But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.”

After the question had been fully discussed, the Council agreed, and sent the following letter to the Gentile Churches :—

23. “And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia :

24. Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment :

25. It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul,

26. Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

27. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth.

28. For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things ;

29. That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication : from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.”

If there ever was a time for the Apostles to enjoin the Jewish Sabbath on the Gentile Christians this was the time, but they did nothing of the kind ; but on the other hand, they decreed that the law of

Moses, with all of its ordinances, circumcision, holy-days and SABBATHS, were not binding on the Gentile Christians. Certain things they did enjoin, but the Sabbath was not one of them—it was not among “the necessary things,” enjoined. It is impossible for us to conceive how such an omission could have occurred, if the Jewish Sabbath had been enjoined on the Gentile Christians. The fact that this decree is silent on the question is decisive evidence that the Apostles did not, and did not intend to enjoin the Jewish Sabbath on the Christian Church.

12. The use of the words “Sabbatoon and “Sabbaton” in the New Testament proves that the Apostles recognized the first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath, for they called it “the first of the Sabbaths” or “the first Sabbath.” The word “Sabbaton” in its various forms, is used sixty-eight (68) times in the New Testament. Of this number it is translated fifty-nine (59) times “Sabbath.” Eight times it is translated “first day of the week,” and once it is translated “week,” Lu. 18:12, where it properly means “between the Sabbath.” In every example in the New Testament where we read, “first day of the week,” in regard to the resurrection of Christ, or the day of the weekly meetings of the Christians,

in the original, it is "the first of the Sabbaths," or the "first Sabbath." The day on which Christ arose from the dead, is always called "the first of the Sabbaths," or "the first Sabbath," except in one single instance, Rev. 1:10, where it is called "the Lord's day." Now, we ask, Why should these words always be translated "Sabbath," when they refer to the "Jewish Sabbath," and the "first day of the week," always when they refer to the Christian Sabbath? In not one single one of these examples do we find either "day" or "week" in the original; it is simply "Sabbatoon" or "Sabbaton" preceded by mian, mia or prootee. Matthew says: Opse de Sabbatoon, tee epiphooskausee eis mian Sabbatoon, which literally rendered is: "In the end of the Sabbaths, as it dawned into the first of the Sabbaths." If Matthew had tried to frame an expression that would have most clearly declared that the Sabbath that Jesus lay in the tomb was the last of the Jewish Sabbaths, and that the day on which he arose from the dead was the first of the Christian Sabbaths, he could not have framed a sentence that would have more accurately set forth that fact in the whole range of the Greek language than the words he uses here. Was this accidental or was it designed? What right had our translators to translate sabba-

toon Sabbath in one part of this sentence, and "the first day of the week," in the other part, when it is exactly the same word and the same form of the word in both instances? Plainly they had no authority for it at all, and the rule adopted by which "Sabbatoon" and "Sabbton," when they mean the Christian Sabbath are always translated "first day of the week," is an arbitrary one and without authority.

Mark 16:2 literally rendered reads : "And very early in the morning, the first of the Sabbaths." Mark 16:9 literally rendered reads : "Now when Jesus was risen early the first Sabbath." What right had our translators to translate "sabbatoon" in Ma. 16:1 Sabbath, and in Ma. 16:2 "the first day of the week?" Plainly, none whatever. In Luke 24:1 literally rendered we read : "Now the first of the Sabbaths, at early dawn."

In John 20:1 literally rendered we read : "Now the first of the Sabbaths." In all these examples from the Gospels "sabbatoon" is translated "the first day of the week."

In Acts 20:7 we read : "And upon the first of the Sabbaths." "Sabbatoon" is here again translated "the first day of the week."

In 1st Cor. 16:2 we have "sabbatoon" again

translated "the first day of the week." By examining every one of these passages you will see that the word *day* is printed in italics, which informs you that it is not in the original but is supplied by the translators. By translating "Sabbatoon" "week" our translators were compelled to supply the word "day" in order to make sense. Is it a supposable case that all of the Evangelists and Paul would have made the same omission and no one of them would have ever inserted the word "day," if they meant by "Sabbatoon" "week?" We cannot suppose such a case, and yet we are bound to assume that that was the case, if they meant by "Sabbatoon" "week," thus compelling our translators in every case to supply their omission!! They did not make any omission. They wrote just what they intended to write, and they called the day of Christ's resurrection "the first of the Sabbaths," and the "first Sabbath." This is the title by which the Christian Sabbath is distinguished from the Jewish Sabbath in the New Testament. We must remember that the Gospels, the Acts and the Epistles were not written until from fifteen to sixty or seventy years after the resurrection of Christ, and that, as we shall see directly, the Christian Sabbath had been established by the authority of our Lord and His Apostles, and the terms

applied to it in the New Testament were well understood and became established usage, and this day was known among the Apostolic Christians, as the Christian Sabbath, and styled in contradistinction from the Jewish Sabbath, "the first of the Sabbaths," or "the first Sabbath."

13. From the day of Christ's resurrection the Apostles and Apostolic Church met on the first day of the week, or Christian Sabbath, for their special Christian worship. On this day our Lord showed Himself first to Mary Magdalene, then to Peter, then to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, and then to the ten assembled in the evening. In John 20:19-23 we read :

"19. Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

20. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.

21. Then said Jesus unto them again, Peace be unto you : as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

22. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost :

23. Whosoever sins ye remit, they are re-

mitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."

This was the first public meeting of the Lord with His disciples after His resurrection, and it took place on the evening of the day that He arose from the dead, which is here called the "the first of the Sabbaths."

It reads, literally : "The same day at evening, being the first of the Sabbaths." In the first clause of this sentence we have the word, "hemera," "the same day at evening." But in the next clause it is absent, as it always is in connection with "Sabbaton," or "Sabbaton," when translated "the first day of the week." Why put in "hemera" day in the first clause and leave it out in the second? Because it does not belong to the second clause, for John did not say "the first day of the week," but he said, "the first of the Sabbaths."

In verse 26 of the same chapter we read :—

26. And after eight days again his disciples, were within, and Thomas with them : then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you."

"After eight days," here does not mean the ninth day, but the eighth day. This meeting, like the former, was doubtless in the evening, and according to the Jewish reckoning it would be at the close of the eighth day, or the eighth day in the evening,

and John follows the Roman reckoning, which would make it the eighth day in the evening. We have two examples of this expression in the New Testament which show clearly what John meant by the expression "after eight days." In Matt. 27:63:

62. "Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate,

63. Saying, Sir, we remember that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again."

And in Ma. 8:31 :—

31. "And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again."

Here "after three days" does not mean "the fourth day," but "the third day." Jesus did not rise on "the fourth day" after His crucifixion, but on "the third day." So "after eight days," does not mean "the ninth day," but "the eighth day." It is thus shown that the risen Christ's second public appearance to His disciples was on the first weekly anniversary of His resurrection, when they were assembled for Christian worship on this second Christian Sabbath. The Holy Ghost descended on the Apostles, and on the assembled Church as they were

gathered together for worship on the seventh weekly anniversary of the resurrection of Christ, on the Day of Pentecost, which was the Christian Sabbath, and the great commission was on that day countersigned by "the promise of the Father," and the door of Faith and Gospel Grace was opened to all the world, and the New Dispensation was inaugurated on that blessed day by the descent of the Holy Spirit and the conversion of three thousand souls. The risen and ascended Christ then set His seal upon this Holy day, and sanctified it, and set it apart as the day of days in His Church. Is there no significance to the Church in all these facts?

14. The first day of the week, or the Christian Sabbath, was set apart by the Apostles as the day of the public assemblies for Christian worship in all the Christian Churches, and on it they assembled for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and other acts of religious worship. In Acts 20:7, we read :—

7. "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight." The literal reading of this passage is :—

"And in the first of the Sabbaths."

The expression "breaking of bread," Acts 2:42,

and "to break bread," in this passage unquestionably means the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and this passage proves that the Christian Sabbath was the day set apart for that solemn service in the Churches. In 1st Cor. 16:1-2, we read :—

1. "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.

2. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."

We learn from this passage that the Apostle Paul ordained in all the Churches of the Gentiles the custom of weekly contributions for the poor, which were made on "the first of the Sabbaths," or the Christian Sabbath, in the weekly assemblies of the Christians. But it is objected that Paul says, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him," and that this does not mean that they were to bring it to the Church on that day, but lay it by at home. But this, if it were true, would not help our Seventh-Day friends at all, for the passage proves conclusively that the Christian working week ended on Saturday and not Friday night. If the Christian week had ended on Friday, then the "laying by" for the poor would have taken place on Saturday, the

Jewish Sabbath, and not on Sunday, the Christian Sabbath. "The laying by" was to take place at the end of the working week, when the profits of the week's work were known. The Christian's working week closed Saturday night, and then the profits of the week's work were counted, and every one was commanded to "lay by," or put into the treasury, according as he had prospered. This passage proves conclusively that the Christian working week began on Monday and ended on Saturday, and that the "laying by" took place when the people had found out the result of their week's work. They could not "lay by in store as God had prospered them" until they knew they had prospered, and this they could not know until the week's work was ended, and they did it after the week's work had ended on Saturday night! So this subterfuge fails entirely, for this passage proves that the Christian working week included Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath, and that Sunday was the Christian day of rest and religious assemblies and worship. But the last clause completely sets aside this subterfuge, for it says, "That there be no gatherings when I come." If every man had laid by in his private poor box at home on "the first of the Sabbaths," then the gathering or public collection, must necessarily have

taken place when Paul came; but it was to avoid this very thing that he had established this order of weekly contributions in their public assemblies on the Christian Sabbath.

Ekastos humoon par eautoo tithetoo thesauridzoon elthoo tote logioo ginoontai, literally rendered reads: "Every one of you for himself put into the treasury as he hath prospered, that there be no collection when I come."

It was the uniform custom of the Jews to take their contributions for the poor to the synagogue on the Sabbath, and put them into the treasury or box for the poor, so that there should always be something on hand for the relief of the poor and helpless. The Christian Church was modeled after the Synagogue, and Paul here ordains this custom in the Gentile Churches of bringing their contributions for the poor on the Christian Sabbath, and putting them into the treasury or poor box, so they would be ready when he came, and thus avoid a public collection for this purpose. We learn from Justin Martyr that this was the uniform custom of the Churches in his day, A. D. 140. This is further confirmed by the fact already established from Acts 20:7, that this was the day set apart for religious worship and instruction.

Jesus appeared to John the beloved disciple on the Christian Sabbath, on the Isle of Patmos, and gave him the wonderful vision of the Apocalypse. John says : "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." Though this is the only place in the New Testament where the Christian Sabbath is called "the Lord's day," yet we know by writers immediately after John, and by one at least who was cotemporary with him, Ignatius of Antioch, that this was a common title of the Christian Sabbath. Was it accidental that all these things to which we have referred, from the first public meeting of Christ with His disciples after His resurrection to the giving of the wonderful vision of the Apocalypse, all occurred on the Christian Sabbath, or did the risen Lord intend by these things to teach the sanctity of this holy day and thus sanctify it and set it apart as the Sabbath of His Church, in memory of His resurrection, and His completed redemption? We cannot believe that they were either accidental or insignificant. They were divinely arranged, and they signify to us that our risen Lord has set apart this day as the Sabbath of His Church, and that we are to keep it joyfully in memory of Redemption's completed work in His resurrection from the dead.

Let us recapitulate our Scripture argument for a moment. We stated at the outset that there are three ways by which it may be proved that the first day of the week, the day on which Christ arose from the dead, has been set apart by divine authority as the Christian Sabbath.

1. By a declaration of the New Testament, that the day of Christ's resurrection is the Christian Sabbath. We have proved that the uniform title of this day in the New Testament is "the first of the Sabbaths," or "the first Sabbath." There is but one exception to this, and that is, Rev. 1:10, where it is called "the Lord's day." This alone ought to be sufficient to settle the question in every thoughtful mind.

2. By a law or command abrogating the law of Moses, and declaring that it is not binding on the Christian Church. We have proved that this was done by a formal act of the Apostles, elders and brethren of the Church in Jerusalem, in Council assembled, presided over by James, our Lord's brother, when the case was brought before then on an appeal from the Church at Antioch, recorded in Acts 15:22-29.. We should also note that Paul in Collossians 2:16, did specifically and by name, set aside the Jewish Sabbath among a number of other things named by him.

3. By establishing by Apostolic precept or example, the first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath: We have demonstrated, out of the Holy Scriptures, that this was the uniform practice of the Apostles from the day of Christ's resurrection to the end of the Apostolic age, and that this day alone was given to the Gentile Christians as the Sabbath of the Lord. These facts ought to silence every word of opposition to the Christian Sabbath.

14. But, in confirmation of the Scripture argument herein set forth, and in refutation of the claim made by our "Seventh Day" friends, that the Church of Rome or Constantine the Emperor, or some one else changed the day which the early Christians observed as the Sabbath, from the seventh to the first day of the week, we will examine the records of the early Church on this question. It is a very cheap way to answer an unanswerable argument by an appeal to prejudice, by saying "the Roman Catholic Church did it."

I state here deliberately, and with full knowledge of what I say, that the man who states that the Roman Catholic Church or Constantine the Great changed the Christian Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week, either does not know whereof he affirms, or states what he knows is not

true. For every one at all acquainted with the history of the early Church knows that such a statement is utterly false. But, you ask, "Does not the Church of Rome claim that she changed the day?" Very likely she does, for she claims everything! She claims that she is the only true and Apostolic Church. She claims that she gave us the Holy Scriptures, and that we cannot prove either their authenticity or their inspiration without her authority. She claims that her Popes are infallible, and that full power is given to them by the Lord Jesus "to feed, to rule, and to govern the whole Church." But do these high claims prove that she has such power, or that she did what she claims to have done? The Roman Catholic Church, as a great ecclesiastical power, as she now exists, had no existence during the first six centuries of the Christian era, and consequently she could do nothing before that period, for the simple reason that she had no existence! When you hear any one speaking of what the Roman Catholic Church did during the first six Christian centuries you may know that he does not know what he is talking about, for he is speaking of a nonentity! It was not until after the death of Gregory the Great, A. D. 604, that the Bishop of Rome became the Bishop of Bishops, and the Church of Rome

became the mistress of all other Churches. It is from these events that we must date the birth of the Roman Catholic Church.

But what are the facts of ecclesiastical history during the first Christian centuries on this point, and long before the Roman Catholic Church had an existence, and before the Emperor Constantine was born? Dr. Mosheim in his *Ecclesiastical History of the First Century*, says :

“All Christians were unanimous in setting apart the first day of the week, on which the triumphant Saviour arose from the dead, for the solemn celebration of public worship. This pious custom, which was derived from the example of the Church at Jerusalem, was founded upon the express appointment of the Apostles, who consecrated that day to the same sacred purpose, and was observed universally throughout the Christian Churches, as appears from the united testimony of the most credible writers. The seventh day of the week was also observed as a festival, not by the Christians in general, but by such Churches only as were principally composed of Jewish converts; nor did the other Christians assume this custom as criminal or unlawful.” (p. 27.)

The great Dr. Neander, the *Ecclesiastical Historian*, states the same thing, Vol. I. p. 295, of his *Ecclesiastical History*. He says :—

“The opposition to Judaism early led to the

special observance of Sunday in place of the Sabbath. The first intimation of this change is in Acts 20:7, where we find the Church assembled on the first day of the week; a still later one is in Rev. 1:10 whereby the 'Lord's day' can hardly be understood the day of judgment. Thus in the Catholic epistle of Barnabas, at the close of the fifteenth chapter, Sunday is designated as the day of jubilee in remembrance of Christ's resurrection and ascension to heaven, and of the new creation which then commenced; and in the epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians it is proposed that even the Jews who had come over to Christianity substituted Sunday in place of the Sabbath. As the Sabbath was regarded as representing Judaism, Sunday was contemplated as a symbol of the new life consecrated to the living Christ and grounded in his resurrection. Sunday was distinguished as a day of joy, by being exempted from fasts, and by the circumstance that prayer was performed on this day in a standing and not in a kneeling posture, as Christ, by his resurrection, had raised up fallen man again to heaven."

We ask, are the statements of these eminent and learned Ecclesiastical Historians borne out by the facts of early Church history? We answer most emphatically, they are. Let us now appeal to the early Christian writers—men who lived in the Apostolic Age, and immediately thereafter, and who knew what the teaching of the Apostles was, and see what they have to say on this point.

1. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, who was born about A. D. 30, and who suffered martyrdom in Rome by being thrown to the wild beasts, A. D. 107, in his epistle to the Magnesians, written while on his journey to Rome, says :—

“If, therefore, those who were brought up in the ancient order of things, have come to the possession of a new hope, no longer observing the Sabbath, but living in the observance of the Lord’s day, on which also our life has sprung up again by Him and by His death.”—Anti-Nicene Library, Vol. 1, p. 62.

Did Ignatius know what the customs and commands of the Apostles were? He lived all through the Apostolic Age, was cotemporary with all the Apostles, and was appointed by them to the pastorate of the Church at Antioch, and was bishop or pastor of that Church at least twenty-five years during the lifetime of the Apostle John. He was no doubt at Antioch when the controversy arose in that Church in regard to circumcision, and observing the law of Moses, recorded in Acts 15, and he certainly understood what the decree of the Council of Jerusalem meant, and whether it abrogated the Jewish Sabbath or not. In view of this fact, his testimony becomes the more important, as it proves conclusively that the decree of the Council of Jerusalem, recorded in Acts 15:28-29, did abrogate the Jewish

Sabbath, along with all other things in the law of Moses.

This Apostolic man testifies that in his day the Jewish Sabbath was not observed by the Gentile Christians and that the Lord's day was observed, and that many converted Jews, adopting the Gentile custom, which had been ordained by the Apostles, no longer observed the Sabbath, but kept "the Lord's day."

2. In the epistle of Barnabas, written not later than the first part of the second century, we read :—

"Further, He says to them, your new moons, and your Sabbaths I cannot endure. Ye perceive how He speaks : Your present Sabbaths are not acceptable to Me, but that which I have made (namely this), when giving rest to all things, I shall make a beginning of the eighth day, that is a beginning of another world. Wherefore, also, we keep the eighth day with joyfulness, the day also on which Jesus arose from the dead."—Ibid. p. 147.

This passage shows that immediately after the Apostles, the Church looked upon the Sabbath as a typical institution, having fulfilled its end ceased to be binding, while the eighth day on which Jesus arose from the dead, was observed as the Christian Sabbath.

2. We will next hear the testimony of Justin

Martyr. This eminent Christian writer was born at Flavia Neapolis, a city of Samaria, near Jacob's well. The date of his birth is uncertain, but it could not have been later than A. D. 100. He suffered martyrdom in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, A. D. 165. He wrote his First Apology for the Christians to the Emperor Antoninus Pius, A. D. 140. In that Apology, chapt. 67, he says :—

“And on the day called Sunday all who live in cities or in the country came together to one place, and the memoirs out of the Apostles or the writings of the prophets are read as long as time permits; then when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs and exhorts to the imitations of these good things. Then we all rise together and pray, and, as we before said, when our prayer is ended, bread and wine is brought, and the president in like manner offers prayers and thanksgiving, according to his ability, and the people assent, saying, Amen; and there is a distribution to each, and a participation of that over which thanks have been given, and to those who are absent a portion is sent by the deacons. And they who are well to do, and willing give what each sees fit, and what is collected is deposited with the president, who succors the orphans and widows, and those who through sickness or any other cause, are in want, and those who are in bonds, and the strangers sojourning among us, and in a word takes care of all who need. But Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly

because it is the first day on which God, having wrought a change in the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ our Saviour on the same day rose from the dead. For He was crucified on the day before that of Saturn (Saturday); and on the day after that of Saturn, which is the day of the Sun, having appeared to His Apostles and disciples, He taught them these things, which we have submitted to you also for your consideration.”—*Ibid.* p. 186.

Here we have the testimony of one of the most eminent writers of the First century, only forty years after the death of the Apostle John, that “all” the Christians, “who live in cities, or in the country, gather together in one place,” on “Sunday” for religious worship; and he affirms that “Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assembly.” Did Justin know what the custom of the Church was in his day? I suppose no one will call in question his knowledge of the custom of the Church on this point. If the day was changed, it was changed during the forty years that elapsed between the death of the Apostle John, and the writing of this Apology, and the observance of Sunday had become universal in that short period!! But here the advocates of the seventh day are met with the difficulty that both Ignatius and Barnabas, as we have seen, declare that Sunday was observed in their day,

during the life of the Apostle John, and that the Christians did not observe the Jewish Sabbath ! The testimony of these three eminent writers of the first part of the second century is decisive as to the practice of the Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Church in regard to the observance of the Christian Sabbath. Justin also tells us that the custom established by Paul, of the weekly contribution for the poor, on the Christian Sabbath, 1st Cor. 16:1-2, was observed in the Church. Justin also affirms that Jesus, after His resurrection, "having appeared to his Apostles and disciples, He taught them these things," thus affirming that Jesus, after His resurrection, did command "His Apostles and disciples," to observe the day of His resurrection, as the Christian Sabbath. Remember that Justin lived with Apostolic men, that is, men who lived with the Apostles, and that he therefore had the best possible opportunity of knowing whether the Apostles taught the Church that the risen Lord commanded them to keep the first day of the week, the day of His resurrection, as the Christian Sabbath. In view of these facts, what becomes of the claim of the advocates of the Seventh day, that the day was changed by the Church of Rome, or by the Emperor Constantine?

In his Dialogue with Trypho the Jew, Justin frequently speaks of the Sabbath, and affirms that the Christians did not observe it, and justifies their non-observance of it on the ground that Abraham and the Patriarchs did not observe it. In chapt. 23 he says :—

“Where, Trypho, I will proclaim to you, and to those who wish to become proselytes, the divine message which I heard from that man. Do you see that the elements are not idle, and keep no Sabbath? Remain as you were born. For if there was no need of circumcision before Abraham, or of the observance of Sabbaths, of feasts and sacrifices before Moses; no more is there need of them now, after that, according to the will of God, Jesus Christ the Son of God has been born without sin, of a virgin sprung from the stock of Abraham.”—Anti-Nicene Library, Vol. I. p. 206.

In Chapt. 26, p. 207, he says :—

“But the Gentiles, who have believed in Him, and have repented of sins which they have committed, they shall receive the inheritance along with the patriarchs and prophets, and the just men who are descended from Jacob, even although they neither keep the Sabbath, nor are circumcised, nor observe the feasts. Assuredly they shall receive the holy inheritance of God !!

Here Justin positively affirms that the Gentile Christians did not keep the Sabbath.

Again, in chapt. 47, p. 218, he says :—

“But if some, through weakmindedness, wish to observe such institutions as were given by Moses, from which they expect some virtue, but which we believe were appointed by reason of the hardness of the people’s hearts, along with their hope in this Christ, and (wish to perform) the eternal and natural acts of righteousness and piety, yet choose to live with the Christians and the faithful, as I said before, not inducing them either to be circumcised like themselves, or to keep the Sabbath, or to observe any other such ceremonies, then I hold that we ought to join ourselves to such, and associate with them in all things as kinsmen and brethren.”

Here Justin calls those Jewish Christians who still observed the law of Moses, and kept the Sabbath, as “weak-minded;” but still he would not non-fellowship them as long as they did not require the Gentile Christians to do as they did, and keep the Sabbath. Is any further testimony necessary to show that in Justin’s time the Christians did not observe the Jewish Sabbath, but that they did observe “the Lord’s day,” or the Christian Sabbath? Surely if any facts can be proven by testimony, these two facts are established. If there has been a change of the day, it has been from the first to the seventh, and not from the seventh to the first, and the advocates of the seventh day have made the change, and they are responsible for it !

4. Bardesanes the Heretic, in addressing Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, who ascended the throne A. D. 161, and died, 180, says :—

“What, then, shall we say respecting the new race of ourselves who are Christians, whom in every country and in every region the Messiah established at His coming; for, lo ! wherever one be, all of us are called by the one name of the Messiah, Christians; and upon one day, which is the first day of the week, assemble ourselves together.”

Here both orthodox and heretic testifies that all Christians held their public assemblies on the first day of the week, or the Christian Sabbath.

5. The teachings of the twelve Apostles, supposed by many to date as early as the first half of the second century, and probably not later than the last half of the second century, in chapt. XIV., says :

“Coming together on the Lord’s day, breaking bread and give thanks, confessing your transgressions, that your sacrifice may be pure. And let no one who has a dispute with his fellow approach with you until they be reconciled, lest your sacrifice be profaned, for this is the sacrifice spoken of by the Lord : “In every place and time bring me a clean sacrifice, for I am a great King saith the Lord, and my name is wonderful among the nations.”

At the time “The Teachings of the Twelve Apostles” was written the Lord’s day was the day

of public assemblies of the Christians for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and other acts of Christian worship. It was the Sabbath and observed as such throughout the Church.

6. Ireneus, A. D. 170—202, in his work against Heresies, book IV. chapt. 16, speaks of the Sabbath as a sign given to the children of Israel, which had its fulfillment in the Kingdom of God. He says :—

“But the Sabbaths taught that we should continue day by day in God's service. * * *

Moreover, the Sabbath of God, that is the Kingdom, was as it were, indicated by created things, in which (kingdom), the man who shall persevere in serving God shall in a state of rest, partake of God's table.

2. “And that man was not justified by these things, but that they were given as a sign to the people, this fact shows that Abraham himself, without circumcision, and without observance of Sabbaths, believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness ; and he was called the friend of God.”—Ante-Nicene Library, Vol. I. p. 48.

This passage proves that the Church in the time of Ireneus did not observe the Jewish Sabbath ; but that it was looked upon, like circumcision, as a sign which had its fulfillment in the Kingdom of God—that it was typical of the rest of the Kingdom.

7. Turtullian, A. D. 200—220, is explicit on this subject. In his book on Idolatry, chapt. xiv., he says :—

“The Holy Spirit upbraided the Jews with their holy days. ‘Your Sabbaths, and new moons, and ceremonies, says He, ‘My soul hateth.’ By us, to whom Sabbaths are strange, and the new moon, and festivals formerly beloved by God, the Saturnalia and New Year’s and midwinter’s festivals and Metronalia are frequented—presents come and go—New Year’s gifts—games join their voices—banquets join their din ! Oh bitter fidelity of the nations to their own sect, which claims no solemnity of the Christians for itself ! Not the Lord’s day, not Pentecost, even if they had known them, would they have shared with us ; for they would fear lest they should seem to be Christians.”—Anti-Nicene Library, Vol. III. p. 70.

Here Turtullian affirms that Sabbaths are strange to the Christians, but that they observed “the Lord’s day.”

Again, in his answer to the Jews, chapt, iv. Of the Observances of the Sabbath,” he says :—

“It follows accordingly, in that, in so far as the abolition of carnal circumcision and of the old law is demonstrated as having been consummated at its specific times, so also, the observance of the Sabbath is demonstrated to have been temporary.”
—Ibid. p. 155.

These testimonials are sufficient to prove :

1. That during the first two centuries the Christians did everywhere observe the Lord's day, as their day of rest and religious worship, and that all of their public assemblies were held on that day.

2. That they did not observe the Jewish Sabbath, that it was "strange to them," and that it was only a sign like circumcision, and that it passed away with the law of Moses like circumcision and all the Jewish ceremonies. These facts prove that neither the Pope of Rome nor the Emperor Constantine changed the day of the Christian Sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week, for the first day of the week was observed by the Church, as the Christian Sabbath, from the beginning, and the Jewish Sabbath was never observed by the Gentile Christians.

But the question is asked : "Did not Constantine the Great, make Sunday a legal holiday, and by an imperial decree make it the legal Christian Sabbath." To this question, we answer Yes. Constantine was the first Christian emperor, and up to his time Christianity had no legal existence, and he did legalize it, and legalized the Christian Sab-

bath along with the other institutions of Christianity, but he did not institute the Christian Sabbath any more than he instituted Christianity itself. He simply legalized that which already existed, but which up to his time had no legal recognition, but was under the ban of law, and had been the subject of persecution. Constantine did just what every state in Christendom has done—he recognized Christianity with its established institutions by law, and put it under the protection of the law, and made the Christian Sabbath a legal holiday, because he found it among the established institutions of the Church. No one of intelligence and honesty will for a moment contend that this was “a changing of the day,” for it was a simple recognition by law of the day already universally set apart by Christians as their day of religious worship and rest—their Sabbath.

The conclusion from the foregoing facts is irresistible, that Jesus and His Apostles did set apart the day on which He arose from the dead, to be observed by His Church as the Christian Sabbath, and that it has been so observed by His Church from the day of His resurrection, and that those who seek to turn the Christian Church back to the observance of the Jewish Sabbath, are doing so right in the

face of the command and example of the Apostles, and the universal practice of the Church during the first centuries of Christianity.







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